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U. S. CONGRESS.—In the Senate, on Saturday, the committee on foreign affairs, to which was referred the correspondence between France and the United States on the subject of mediation, made a report with resolutions declining any such mediation. The committee of conference on the finance bill presented a report compromising the differences between the two Houses on the bank tax clause, by which the tax is to be one per cent. per annum on all circulation under the amounts fixed in the House sliding scale, and two per cent. on circulation in excess of those amounts, with the one quarter of one per cent. tax on all deposits.—The bill for enrolling and calling out the militia of the United States, as amended by the House, was taken up and discussed at length. The amendments were adopted, and the bill was thus passed. In the House of Representatives, the committee on elections reported adversely on the claims of Alvin Hawkins as a representative from the ninth Congressional district of Tennessee. The report of the conference committee on the bill to increase the number of major and brigadier generals was adopted, and the bill passed. The bill amendatory to the internal tax law was passed as reported from the committee on the whole.—The House agreed to the report of the conference committee on the finance bill, as noticed above, and the bill passed.

The property known as the "Chinese Building," formerly a well known resort of "Old New York," was recently sold at auction for \$155,000.

The Provost Marshal at Aquia Creek has commenced in good earnest clearing out the gamblers, swindlers, and suckers generally, who, in large numbers, had concentrated at Aquia Creek. He shipped per the John Brooks yesterday about a score of these worthless fellows, under guard.

Gen. De Ahua, whose nomination was not confirmed by the Senate, has addressed a memorial to Congress, in which he makes a statement of grievance which bears hard on General Halleck. Gen. De Ahua is a soldier by profession, educated at the Royal Military College at Munich.

Gen. McClellan has secluded himself from the public since his arrival, only leaving his room to testify before the Committee on the conduct of the war. It is said that Gen. Scott will express his disapproval of the publication of the letter which the President declined to communicate to Congress, but which was "ventilated" from the files of the War Department.

The city of St. Louis is suffering from a want of coal, the impossibility of obtaining which has brought to a stand and completely paralysed nearly all manufacturing enterprises in the city.

## WAR NEWS.

One of the New York Sunday sensational journals has received by the way of Cairo a batch of rumors from Vicksburg. It is reported that the canal was completed on the 20th ult., that the gunboats had all passed through, and that the transports were preparing to follow when the Confederate batteries at Warrenton should be reduced. When this was accomplished the whole force would be sent against Port Hudson. It is also reported that the small gunboat fleet had reached the Yazoo river, and were vigorously operating against the Confederates in the rear of Vicksburg. There were also reports of serious disasters to the Federal forces, but these, however, were not credited. The Baltimore American thinks all these reports are mere "canards."

It is said that the Confederate General Van Dorn has crossed the Tennessee river at Florence with 8,000 cavalry to reinforce General Bragg. The expedition from Corinth, under Colonel Corwan, is reported to have captured two hundred Confederates, under Gen. Rodley, at Tusculumbia, on the 22d ult., with a large amount of ammunition and a provision train.

Gen. Foster has returned to Newbern to make arrangements for another expedition.

It is reported that the Confederates have placed serious obstructions in the harbor of Charleston.

It appears that the Pennsylvania Reserves refused to do duty, instead of going to sleep, when sent on picket in the vicinity of Union Mills. The Washington Star says that their excuse is, and the reason they assign is, they have been in the service since May or June, 1861; that they have participated in most of the battles of Virginia; that they are so reduced in numbers, that no one regiment will number 250 men, and that their request to go home and return has been disregarded. Just before going out on duty the day on which they refused, they were informed that the 2d New Hampshire Volunteers, Lieut. Col. Baily commanding, a three years regiment, numbering 560 muskets had been permitted to go home for the purpose of filling their regiment to the maximum number. The Reserves acted upon the ground that partiality was shown.

Adelina Patti continues to attract all Paris to the Italian Opera, which has witnessed no such *furor* since the days of Malibran. The Emperor, who cares little for music, has been to hear Patti half a dozen times, and with the Empress, was present at the Diva's benefit, when she appeared for the first time in Paris, as Zerlina, in Don Giovanni. During the evening the young artiste was invited to the Imperial box, and conversed with their Majesties during half an hour. They presented her with a magnificent diamond bracelet.

A Naval officer has been arrested for being drunk in a N. Y. concert saloon, cheering President Davis as the only decent man in the country, and cursing President Lincoln and Admiral Paulding. The Court sent him to Fort Lafayette. He was double ironed.

General Townsend was armed with power on the 22d, it is said, to adjudicate all differences between General Foster and General Hunter's forces. The arrest of General Stevenson and Chief Quartermaster Slaight, of Foster's command, by Gen. Hunter, created some excitement. It is said they were arrested on a misunderstanding. An announcement has been made by General Townsend that the forces from North Carolina are not to be taken out of that department permanently, or detached from their old army corps.

A letter received in Boston from on board the gunboat Rhode Island states that a steamer supposed to be the Alabama or the Florida, was chased by the Rhode Island during the day and night of the 7th ult., but without success. The Alabama was ordered out of Port Royal, Jamaica, on January 25, before having completed her repairs.

Four submarine contrivances, intended for work in Charleston harbor, were recently sent from New York in tow of the steamer Ericsson. After fourteen days passage the steamer arrived at Port Royal with only one of the machines, the others having broken loose and gone to the bottom.

There is a serious difficulty between Brazil and Peru, on the subject of the navigation of the Amazon, which according to anti-Brazilian accounts, the Brazilian Government wants to monopolize.

The Port Royal correspondent of the New York Tribune writes:—"The Eighteenth Army Corps has made a most unfavorable impression here, by their recent actions. Since landing upon St. Helena Island, some of the regiments have manifested a most wanton vandalism in the destruction of property and abuse of the defenceless. Last Tuesday ten houses occupied by negroes were burned to the ground, money and other articles plundered, and at various times before and since haystacks have been destroyed, and pigs and cows either shot or carried off. These outrages are blamed upon the Twenty-fourth Massachusetts and Ninth New Jersey. In addition, Nathaniel Tarr, a Massachusetts citizen, complains that the hull of a schooner purchased by him, and the masts and rigging of another vessel which he had designed to transfer, had been mutilated and destroyed by the One Hundredth New York to such an extent that \$2,500 would be required to replace the materials."

"Malakoff" writes to the New York Times that every one in Paris seems to be waiting patiently to see what will be the reply of the American Government to the last French note. In the clubs bets are being made as to whether Mr. Seward will accept or reject the French proposition, and many persons there are who predict, in case of a rejection, the most grave consequences.

A letter from Fortress Monroe, Feb. 27, says, "there is no news here to-day to mention, and no immediate prospect of any army movements from this place—rumors to the contrary notwithstanding."